



PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT BIRTH THROUGH FIVE (PDG B-5)

Illinois has been awarded a PDG B-5 grant from the Administration for Children and Families at the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education. The purpose of this grant is to support Illinois' development of a strategic plan that facilitates collaboration and coordination among existing programs of early childhood care and education (ECCE) in a mixed delivery system across the State.

Illinois' vision for PDG B-5 is that access to a continuous, equitable, and high-quality early childhood system enables children, with the support of their families and communities, to grow up safe, healthy, happy, and ready to succeed. We will conduct the following activities:

Activity One: Statewide B-5 Needs Assessment

In conducting the needs assessment, Illinois will coordinate outreach to stakeholders, inventory and analyze existing statewide needs assessments, document data and research gaps, develop a set of research plans, complete statewide cost modeling, and expand the scope of our existing unduplicated count of children B-5 in ECCE programs.

Activity Two: Statewide Strategic Plan

In developing the strategic plan, Illinois will update the existing framework of our Early Learning Council (ELC), inventory and mine existing strategic plans for aligned goals, and conduct focused planning to align our governance, expand coordinated intake, and increase access at the community level for children with special needs and children in the child welfare system.

Activity Three: Maximize Parental Choice and Knowledge

To increase parents' ability to make informed decisions about their children's care and education, Illinois will formalize family representation on the ELC, conduct Community Cafes to support parents in their children's development, increase supports for families of children with disabilities and experiencing homelessness, and update public-facing websites to better respond to the needs of families.

Activity Four: Share Best Practices

Illinois will share best practices with the field by coordinating T&TA across the State, engaging community voice through a Community System Portal, enhancing trainings for Family, Friend, and Neighbor providers, creating a database to facilitate cross-system use of early childhood mental health consultation, and supporting site-based Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI).

Activity Five: Improve Overall Quality

Illinois will improve the overall quality of ECCE by improving infant/toddler program environments and learning experiences and working through barriers to pathways for ECCE career advancement.